

ANALYSIS OF ORE PRODUCTION, WITH CONCLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Committee was directed, by memorandum from AD/ORE date 4 May, 1949, to "review past and present ORE production, for the purpose of appraising the degree of correspondence that exists between the ORE production effort and its mission." The Committee proceeded, (a) to examine the basic NSC, CIA, and ORE directives for an authoritative statement of an ORE mission; and (b) to examine the actual ORE production in order to establish the direction it has taken. The Committee agreed that it would limit itself to a descriptive and quantitative analysis of ORE production, and not to make judgments respecting the quality of this production.

I. THE BASIC DIRECTIVES (See Appendix "A")

A. No adequate definition of an ORE mission exists. The Committee could not find in the basic NSA 1947, NSC, CIA, and ORE directives any statement of a specific ORE mission that was sufficiently clear and detailed, and generally understood and accepted both within and outside of ORE to provide a proper continuing basis for guiding or appraising ORE activities and production.

The National Security Act of 1947 and the basic NSC directives provide an extremely general definition of a CIA mission. CIA is made responsible for producing "National Intelligence," and for performing "Services of Common Concern" on behalf of existing intelligence agencies. NSCID #3 further defined National Intelligence as "integrated departmental intelligence that covers the broad aspects of national policy and national security, is of concern to more than one Department..., and transcends the exclusive competence of a single Department..."

This broadly stated CIA responsibility was not, however, given the more explicit definition that would have spelled out its relevant parts in the form of a mission for ORE. Consequently, ORE has been without an authoritative frame of reference by which its production effort could have been planned, guided and appraised. The difficulties inherent in this situation have been dealt with by administrative decisions which have, in general, been directed to problems of procedure, forms of production, and inter-agency relations rather than to the development of a clear official policy that would act in lieu of an authoritative statement of mission.

Consequently, the Committee considered that a significant gap developed between the basic NSC directives which broadly indicated a

mission for CIA, and the actual basis on which ORE produces intelligence.

B. This gap, which could have been bridged by spelling out a broad statement of a CIA mission in terms of a precise operational mission for ORE, has instead been filled by ad hoc judgments and commitments.

These developed in connection with specific external requests made upon ORE; and, more significantly, from individual and subordinate concepts of function and method based on the judgment of Branch and Group chiefs and reflecting the capabilities, work-habits, and internal organization of Branches and Groups.

Thus, in the absence of specific definition from above and overall policy guidance from within, the production effort of ORE represents an essentially uncontrolled evolution, in the course of which patterns of production have been initiated on an ad hoc basis and become confirmed by repetition. These patterns, which are identified below, gradually came to have some of the validity of "missions." While no single mission of ORE has been established, a variety of "missions" have evolved in practice.*

* Note is taken of certain ORE Operating Procedures, in which over-all policy guidance is introduced; but the Committee cannot find that the development of a variety of patterns of production was significantly checked.

II. PATTERNS OF ORE PRODUCTION (See Appendix "B")

The following patterns emerge when ORE production is broken down by type:

1. Periodically Recurrent Production.
2. Reports and Estimates.
3. Production of intelligence support on a continuing basis for other CIA offices and outside agencies; and the performance of Services of Common Concern.

A. Periodically Recurrent Production. (See Appendix "B", Sect. II)

This category includes the CIA Daily and Weekly Summaries, the CIA Monthly Review, Branch Weekly and monthly working papers, and Branch daily and weekly estimates. Production of this category claims approximately 15% of ORE professional man-hours. There is evidence that,

- (1) This category of production has steadily expanded in volume

and variety of publication. Expansion has been particularly marked during 1948-49.

(2) The concept of "current intelligence" has broadened beyond the definition given in NSCID #3.* There is a marked tendency to comment on

* The Committee decided not to use the terms "Current" and "Staff" intelligence in its Report. These terms, as employed within ORE, do not correspond with the definitions given by NSCID #3; and, in addition, the distinction between them has become blurred. NSCID #3 defines "Current Intelligence" as "spot information of immediate interest and value to operating or policy staffs without the delays incident to complete evaluation or interpretation."

and to evaluate the "spot information" reported. There is also a tendency to produce comprehensive area reviews and analyses of significant developments.

B. Reports and Estimates (See Appendix "B", Sect. I)

This category includes the SR, ORE, and IM Series, and Special Evaluations. Production of this category claims approximately 23% of ORE professional man-hours (16% for ORE and IM items; 7% for SR items.) There is evidence that,

(1) There has been a trend away from the handling of broadly defined to the handling of narrowly defined problems; from long-term to short-term problems; from the predictive method of treatment to the non-predictive; and, finally, from the fully and formally coordinated type of publication to the incompletely or informally coordinated type.

(2) This trend generally correlates with an increase in the number of specific external requests made upon ORE, and reflects the character of these requests.

C. Supporting Services and Services of Common Concern (See Appendix "B", Sect. III)

This category includes the evaluation of OO, OSO, A-2 and State Department Reports; support of OSO, OPC, NSC-4 Committee, and External Research Program; the review of NIS material; and the activities of the Map Branch. Excluding the Basic Intelligence Group and Map Branch, activity in this category claims approximately 16% of ORE professional man-hours. This represents as much time as is currently spent on Periodically

SECRET

Recurrent Production or on the production of ORE and IM items. It is considered that,

(1) The man-hours spent on these activities take up an increasingly significant proportion of ORE professional time.

(2) Although some of these activities might fall within the meaning of "Services of Common Concern," few of them can be seriously considered as related to the production of "national intelligence," no matter how that general term is defined.

D. ORE production can also be classified according to the presumed use for which it is intended

1. To meet high policy level needs. The CIA Daily and, to some extent, the Weekly Summary, the CIA Monthly Review, and miscellaneous ORE and IM items fall within this category.

2. To meet the needs of a wide range of lower-level users, in both policy-making and other intelligence agencies. A large number of ORE and most IM items, the CIA Weekly Summary to some extent, Branch working papers, and almost all Supporting Services fall within this category.

III. DETERMINING FACTORS IN SHAPING PATTERNS OF PRODUCTION

The present patterns of ORE production are the result of an essentially uncontrolled evolution, in which the significant determining factors have been external demand, individual and varying concepts of function and method, and internal pressures, all of which have had relatively free play.

A. Much ORE production has followed from external requests, and from the presumption that such requests indicated a continuing need. The CIA Daily Summary, the SR Series, the "Current Situation in _____" type of ORE, a large number of ORE and IM items, and many Supporting Services were initiated and then continued in this way. This factor, however, is considered less significant than those operating within ORE itself because the bulk of production has been self-initiated.

B. The self-initiated production of ORE has, in considerable part, been shaped by various and often contradictory ideas about the mission of ORE and the method in which it might best be carried out. The following concepts of mission are noted as having been influential:

1. ORE should produce intelligence in support of high-level policy makers.

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2. ORE should produce intelligence for a wide-range of lower-level users.

3. ORE should produce intelligence in continuing support for Departmental planning and operations.

The following concepts of method are noted as having been also influential:

1. ORE intelligence should be produced on a periodically recurring basis, ranging in time span from daily to monthly, and in content from analysis of significant developments to comprehensive area reviews.

2. ORE intelligence should consist of reports and estimates, which should be made only as a significant need exists, or is considered to exist.

3. ORE intelligence should be restricted to evaluations and predictions.

4. ORE intelligence should emphasize reporting and "spot information."

C. These concepts were for the most part formulated within ORE and without direct reference to the needs of high policy bodies or other consumers of intelligence. This is due to the fact that no close working relationship has developed between ORE and the policy-making bodies. Hence it has come about that ORE production, both in its doctrine and practice, has been based largely upon the producer's judgment and his informed guesses as to what was important or what might be needed.

D. Of equal importance is the fact that ORE production has also been conditioned by other identifiable internal considerations. The following are noted as having been influential:

1. The long established tradition in all intelligence agencies of producing current periodical reviews.

2. The belief that periodically recurrent production is excellent training, particularly for junior analysts; serves to maintain a running record; and provides a morale-boosting medium of expression.

3. The fact that much periodically recurrent production, as well as many IM items are a natural by-product of the intelligence process employed to produce fully developed estimates.

4. The desire to avoid the difficulties of coordination with other intelligence agencies.

5. The existence of competition between Branches and Groups.

6. The less rigid qualitative demands upon personnel if production "follows the cables," does not require special aptitudes, and can be systematized into a controllable routine.

IV. COMPETITION AND CONFUSION BETWEEN PATTERNS OF PRODUCTION.

A. In the absence of a defined mission or basic administrative control, little uniformity of production has been established among the Branches and Groups. One Branch puts its major effort into ORE items. Other Branches emphasize periodically recurrent production. Two Branches expend the largest single portion of their professional time on supporting services.

B. Furthermore, the various patterns of production make competing claims on limited professional time. Each Branch or Group, and every analyst within a Branch or Group tends to acquire a multiplicity of functions and responsibilities which prevents adequate attention being given to any particular category of activity or production. Thus methods and concepts of mission, which are essentially complementary, appear as competitive. External requests, periodical production, and supporting services tend to take precedence over other types of production because they so frequently involve working to fixed "dead lines."

C. The free play of competing concepts of function and method has left ORE exposed to the pressure of external requests because, in the absence of a uniform authoritative concept, it becomes very difficult to judge the validity of such requests.

V. SHIFT IN THE EMPHASIS OF ORE PRODUCTION

The most significant trend revealed by the Committee's examination is that the effort of ORE has quantitatively shifted from the production of high-level intelligence for a restricted policy-making audience to the production of a wide range of general intelligence for a broad lower-level audience. (See Appendix "B," Sect. I, B; II)

A. The production of Reports and Estimates during the period July 1946 - December 1947 suggests an effort to establish a pattern emphasizing a broad political-economic-strategic approach and attempting to project trends and predict future developments. During the same period, the CIA Daily and Weekly Summaries were the only official periodical publications, and were distributed to a highly restricted audience.

B. In the period 1948-49, this pattern altered. The emphasis in Reports and Estimates shifted from the broad, long-term type of problem to the narrowly defined, short-term type; and from the predictive to the non-predictive type. It is significant that the IM Series, designed to meet external requests and essentially more limited in scope and method than the ORE Series, was initiated in this period. A quantitative displacement of ORE by IM has occurred. Simultaneously, a wide range of Branch working papers were disseminated to a working-level audience outside ORE. In addition, ORE accepted an increasing number of commitments to provide supporting services for other CIA offices and outside agencies. Thus, while ORE has attempted to maintain its original high level function, its production effort has quantitatively shifted to the fulfillment of basically different types of requirement.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

That Committee finds that,

A. The present production effort of ORE is the product of an essentially uncontrolled evolution.

B. The reasons for this form of development are considered to have been,

1. The absence of a mission for ORE defined at the NSC level.

2. The absence of a clearly and consistently developed policy within CIA to stand in place of a defined mission.

3. The consequent free play given to internal suggestions and external requests.

C. Uncontrolled evolution has resulted in the establishment of a variety of patterns of activity and production. Each of these has, by repeated use, become a determining influence almost equivalent to that of a "mission." These "pattern - missions" overlap, interfere, and compete with each other for limited professional man-hours.

D. In particular, the emphasis in production has shifted from reporting, synthesis and estimating for a restricted, high-level, policy-making audience to reporting, periodical review, analysis, and short-term prediction for a comparatively unrestricted lower-level audience.

E. A significant consequence of this evolution is that CIA, though

still defined as the apex of the governmental intelligence structure, seems to be increasingly regarded as in the status of a competing IAC Agency. ORE is unfavorably placed to compete at this level, since it is without the definitive guidance provided by a traditional Departmental responsibility.

F. There is no evidence in the basic documents that it was intended or desired that ORE, as the producing component of CIA, should be simply an additional intelligence unit in the governmental structure. There is, on the contrary, evidence that it was intended and desired that ORE should provide a final point of intelligence synthesis in that structure; and that, as such, its authoritative focus should be the highest policy-making level of government, particularly that sector of policy-making that lay beyond the competence of single Departments or Agencies.

G. Many of the patterns of activity and production, even though by strict definition they appear remote from the general responsibility of CIA as laid down in the basic documents, may, however, be valid;

1. Because they are an indispensible even if subordinate part of the whole intelligence process which leads to synthesis and estimate.

2. Because they fill a positive need which cannot, in the present state of the governmental intelligence structure, be met in any other way .

H. The immediate problem is not necessarily to be solved by a wholesale lopping off of all activities and categories of production that do not conform to a strict interpretation of the basic directives. It can, however, be realistically approached by recognizing and separating the various categories of production in relation to

- (1) The reporting, reviewing, and analytical part of the intelligence process

- (2) The synthesizing and estimating part of the intelligence process.

This then makes it possible to decide which activities and categories of production are valid and on what grounds; and to establish priorities among them as a first step toward

- (1) Making the organizational changes required to discharge effectively the responsibilities accepted;

(2) Establishing the administrative controls needed to check further undirected evolution, to eliminate conflicting claims on limited capabilities, and to keep future production in accord with agreed and understood Mission or Policy.